

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 07244 01 OF 05 021931Z
ACTION SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00
NSAE-00 CTME-00 TRSE-00 ICA-20 NSC-05 OES-09
OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 L-03 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
AGRE-00 AID-05 ARA-14 /113 W
-----056806 022040Z /45

P R 021646Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO DEA HQS WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9293

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 5 BOGOTA 7244

DEA FOR ADMINISTRATOR BENSINGER; ENOA

STATE FOR SN/M

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR CO
SUBJECT: BENSINGER RADIO INTERVIEW

1. THE FOLLOWING APPEARED AS FRONT PAGE NEWS IN THE BOGOTA NEWSPAPER " EL TIEMPO" ON JULY 31 REGARDING THE INTERVIEW GRANTED BY ADMINISTRATOR BENSINGER TO BOGOTA NEWS CHAIN TODELAR. TITLE OF THE ARTICLE: UNITED STATES REQUESTS MILITARIZATION OF THE GUAJIRA CUE TO DRUG TRAFFICKING. THE ARTICLE IS QUOTED AS FOLLOWS:

2. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES, THROUGH THE CHIEF OF THE OFFICE OF NARCOTICS, PETER B. BENSINGER, PROPOSED THE MILITARIZATION OF THE GUAJIRA DEPARTMENT ANF BLOCKING THE ROADS WHICH MAKE POSSIBLE THE EXPANSIONS OF THE MARIJUANA MARKET AS AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF COMBAT-ING ITS TRAFFIC.

3. AT THE SAME TIME, THE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCED THAT HIS
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 07244 01 OF 05 021931Z

COUNTRY IS CARRYING OUT AN ACTIVE AND ENERGETIC PROGRAM AGAINST DRUG TRAFFICKERS AND COMMENDED COLOMBIAN EFFORTS TO LIMIT THE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS.

4. BENSINGER, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE DEA (DRUG ENFORCE-MENT ADMINISTRATION) AGENCY FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS, GRANTED AN AMPLE REPORT ON THE QTE TECHNICIANS AND

POLITICIANS UNQTE PROGRAM OF RADIO TOLEDAR.

5. AMONG OTHER THINGS, HE ESTIMATED THE VALUE OF DRUG TRAFFICKING BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICAN IN FIVE BILLION DOLLARS (SOME 200,000MILLION COLOMBIAN PESOS). HE REVEALED THAT IN 1978 ALONE, 1,100,000 POUNDS OF MARIHUANA WERE SEIZED FROM 40 LUXURIOUS VESSELS THAT FREELY PASS OVER THE OCEANS.

6. ON THE OTHER HAND,HE INSISTED THAT IN THE CASE OF THE GUAJIRA - CONSIDERED THE MOST IMPORTANT DEPARTMENT IN THE TRAFFICING OF DRUGS - AND SUSTAINED THAT IT WAS NOT ONLY DRUGS QTE BECAUSE WHEN 30 TO 40 CLANDESTINE AIRPORTS EXIST, IT IS A THREAT TO COLOMBIA'S OWN NATIONAL SECURITY UNQTE.

7. HE COMMENDED THE RESULTS AT THE RECENT CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE HELD IN LIMA TO ADOPT IN-DEPTH MEASURES AGAINST DRUG TRAFFICKING AND UNFERLINED THE NECESSITY FOR A QTE BLACK BOOK UNQTE WHERE THE NAMES ARE SHOWN OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE UN NARCOTICS COMMERCE AS WELL AS THE VOLUME OF DRUGS SEIZED.

8. QTE IN THAT MEETING - STATE BENSINGER - WE REITERATED THE COMMITMENT THAT EACH COUNTRY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR LIMITNG THE CULTIVATIONOF NARCOTICS, UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 07244 01 OF 05 021931Z

AND THE OGOVERNMENTS OF PERU, BOLIVIA, COLOMBIA, UNITED STATES, MEXICO AND VENEZUELA ARE IN AGREEMENT UNQTE.

9. INSISTING ON THE NECESSITY TO MILITARIZE THE GUAJIRA, BENSINGER REFERRED TO THE SUCCESS OBTAINED BY MEXICO, WHERE IN THE LAST YEAR 41,000 OPIUM ANDPOPPY CULTIVATIONS WERE DESTROYED. THIS RESULTED IN A DECREASE OF 60PCT OF DEATHS DUE TO DRUGS AND 70PCT IN THE LEVEL OF CONSUMPTION IN THE UNITED STTATES.

0. BENSINGER ALSO MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

J11. BENSINGER SAID THE QTE THE UNITED STATES AND COLOMBIA - AS WELL AS 61 OTHER NATIONS - SIGNED AN AGREEMENT REGARDING NARCOTICS IN WHICH THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE COMMITTED TO FIGHT AGAINST THE TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS UNQTE.

12. QTE IN THE LAST FEW DAYS I HAVE MET WITH OFFICIALS OF THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND I HAVE RECEIVED NOT ONLY HOSPITALITY, FRIENDSHIP AND COURTESY, BUT ALSO THE SINCERE INTEREST AND THE MOST DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING THIS DIFFICULT SITUATION WHICH CONFRONTS BOTH

CMUNTIES UNQTE.

13. QTE I AM VERY IMPRESSED BY THE DEDICATION OF ATTORNEY GENERAL JAIME SERRANO RUEDA IN THIS MATTER; ALSO I HAVE SPOKEN WITH DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CUSTOMS, DR. FRANCO AND WITH THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL POLICE, GENERAL VALDERRAMA UNQTE.

14. QTE THURSDAY I WAS AT THE GUAJIRA PENNINSULA AND FRIDAY WE LANDED AT LETICIA, IN THE AMAZONAS UNQTE.

15. SUB-TITLE: THE GUAJIRA, BRIDGE FOR TRAFFICKING; HE EXPRESSED THAT QTE THE PURPOSE OF MY VISIT WAS NT TO SIGN AGREEMENTS, BUT TO LOOK AT THE PROBLEM FROM UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 07244 01 OF 05 021931Z

BEGINNING TO END, WHICH I WAS ABLE TO DO PERFECTLY WITH OFFICIALS OF THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT UNQTE.

16. QTE IN THE GUAJIRA PENNINSULA I WAS SURPRISED BY THE ROUTINE AND ALMOST NORMAL FLOW OF DRUG TRAFFICKING WHICH IS QUITE EVIDENT. THE GREAT NUMBER OF CLANDESTINE AIR STRIPSN NOT EVEN CAMOUFLAGED, BUT OUT IN THE OPEN, IN VIEW OF EVERYBODY, AND THE LARGE CULTIVATIONS OF MARIJUANA, WHICH ARE LOCATED AT LESS THAN 10 KILOMETERS FROM THE STRIPS AND ROADS UNQTE.

17. QTE I AM CONVINCED THAT THIS SITUATION HAS TO BE FACED BY STRENGTHENING THE MEASURES ANF TAKING NEW ONES TOWARDS A SPECIFIC ACTION THAT REQUIRES, POSSIBLY MILITARY PRESENCE.

18. QTE I DISCUSSED THIS WITH OFFICIALS WHO ACCOMPANIED ME ON THE TRIP AND THE REALITY OF PROLIFERATION WAS LEFT ESTABLISHED, NOT ONLY OF THE LARGE AMOUNTS OF AIR STRIPS BUT ALSO THE MARIJUANA CULTIVATIONS. MY EXPERIENCE TELLS ME THAT THIS PROBLEM CAN BE SOLVED BY MILITARY PRESENCE.

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 07244 02 OF 05 021932Z

ACTION SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00
NSAE-00 CTME-00 TRSE-00 ICA-20 NSC-05 OES-09
OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 L-03 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
AGRE-00 ARA-14 AID-05 /113 W
-----056890 022041Z /45

P R 021646Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO DEA HQS WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9294

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 5 BOGOTA 7244

DEA FOR ADMINISTRATOR BENSINGER; ENOA

STATE FOR N/M

19. SUB-TITLE: MEETING I LIMA. QTE THE CONFERENCE WHICH TOOK PLACE IN LIMA INCLUDED THE PARTICIPATION OF THE HIGHEST GOVERNMENT AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS, WHICH I HAVE EVER SEEN IN MANY YEARS TO MY KNOWLEDGE, FROM THE UNITED STATES, CANADA, MEXICO AND THE CARIBBEAN, BRASIL PERK, ECUADOR, BOLIVIA, ARGENTINA, CHILE, GUYANA, PANAMA, PUERTO RICO. SERRANO RUEDA WAS THE REPRESENTATIVE FOR COLOMBIA.

20. THE CONFERENCE TOUCHED MANY SUBJECTS, AMONG WHICH THE ILLEGAL PRODUCTION OF NARCOTICS WAS PRINCIPALLY EMPHASIZED, AND THERE WAS A CONSENSUS THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY TO LIMIT CULTIVATION AND PROCESSING OF ILLEGAL DRUGS CONCERNS EACH ONE OF THE COUNTRIES.

21. WE NEED TO AFOPT DRASTIC SANCTIONS AGAINST THE TRAFFICKERS WHO ARE GETTING RICH AS A RESULT OF THE PRODUCTION AND INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE OF THESE SUBSTANCES.
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 07244 02 OF 05 021932Z

2. I WOULD LIKE TO ADD THAT FRIDAY NIGHT I LEARNED THAT THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES FAVORABLY APPROVED LEGISLATION WHICH WE RECOMMENDED AND WHICH GIVES US THE POSSIBILITY IN AMERICA IN ESSENCE TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THE PROBLEM, LEGALLY COMING FACE TO FACE WITH IT, UPON BASIS OF OUR INVESTIGATIONS, BY WHICH WE CAN FOLLOW THE FLOW OF MONIES AND FIND THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING UNQTE.

23. THEN, IN LIMA, AS IN THE UNITED STATES, WE SAID

THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO OPEN A "BLACK BOOK" WHERE NOT ONLY THE NAMES OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS ARE STATED, BUT ALSO THE VOLUME OF THE DRUGS SEIZED.

24. IN LIMA WE REITERATED THE COMMITMENT THAT EACH COUNTRY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR LIMITING THE CULTIVATION OF NARCOTICS SUBSTANCES AND THIS WAS AGREED UPON AMONG THE SPEKSMEN OF PERU, BOLIVIA, COLOMBIA, UNITED STATES AND MEXICO.

25. IN MEXICO, FOR EXAMPLE, THE GOVERNMENT DESTROYED 41,000 OPIUM AND POPPLY CULTIVATIONS IN THE LAST YEAR WITH THE RESULT THAT IN THE UNITED STATES THERE WAS A DECLINE OF 60PCT IN DEATHS DUE TO DRUGS AND 70PCT IN CONSUMPTION. WE TALKED ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF COCAINE. IT IS GROWING. THE TRAFFIC BETWEEN PERU AND COLOMBIA WAS TALKED ABOUT, AND FROM THESE COUNTRIES TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES, AS WELL AS THE TRAFFIC OF MARIHUANA FROM THE NORTH COAST. THESE PROBLEMS MAKE US MOBILIZE THE FORCES IN THE BATTLE TO CONFRONT AND SOLVE THEM.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 07244 02 OF 05 021932Z

26. THE CONFERENCE IN LIMA ENDED WITH THE DECISION TO EXCHANGE MORE INFORMATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS, TO WORK UNITEDLY ON A FIRST-HAND BASIS BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES, AND TO CONVINCE OURSELVES OF THE NECESITY TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM AND TO SEARCH FOR FINANCING AND LEGISLATION NECESSARY TO PRODUCE THE GREATEST IMPACT ON TRAFFICKING UNQTE.

27. SUB-TITLE: PLANS IN THE GUAJIRA. UPON RETURNING FROM HIS VISIT TO THE GUAJIRA, THE DIRECTOR OF THE NORTH AMERICAN DEA COMMENTED TO TOLEDAR: QTE I WILL TELL YOU MY IMPRESSIONS: MILITARY PRESENCE IS NECESSARY IN THE GUAJIRA; ROADS SHOULD BE BLOCKED IN ORDER TO INTERCEPT THE TRUCKS WHICH TRANSPORT LARGE QUANTITIES OF DRUGS TO THE AIR STRIPS, AS SHOULD THE STRIPS THEMSELVES, WHICH ARE QUITE VISIBLE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE; IT IS NECESSARY TO STATION MILITARY PERSONNEL DAY AND NIGHT. MARIJUANA CULTIVATIONS WHICH GROW IN THESE REGIONS CAN ONLY BE DESTROYED WITH MILITARY PRESENCE, IN ORDER THAT THESE AREAS CAN ONCE AGAIN BE UTILIZED FOR COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE.

28. THE PROBLEM IN THE GUAJIRA IS NOT ONE ONLY OF DRUGS, BUT ALSO WHEN 30 TO 40 AIRSTRIPS EXIST, WHICH HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED ONE BY ONE BY THE TRAFFICKERS, IT IS CONVERTED INTO A PROBLEM OF NATIONAL SECURITY.

29. I DON'T THINK THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO STOP THE PROBLEM BY ONLY DESTROYING THE CULTIVATIONS, BUT ALSO ELIMINATING THE CLANDESTINE AIR STRIPS IN THE ZONE OF THE COLOMBIAN NORTH COAST.

30. WITH THESE MEASURES IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO SIGNIFICANTLY HALT THE PROBLEM AND OUR GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO CLOSELY COOPERATE WITH COLOMBIAN OFFICIALS.

31. SUB-TITLE: COLOMBIAN EFFORTS. BENSINGER
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 07244 02 OF 05 021932Z

RECOGNIZED COLOMBIAN EFFORTS TO ERRADICATE THE PROBLEM: QTE I AM PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW MECHANISMS ESTABLISHED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF THE ANTI-NARCOTICS POLICE IN BARRANQUILLA, CALI, MEDELLIN, PASTO AND POPAYAN WHICH ARE DIRECTLY ORIENTED TOWARDS THE PROBLEM OF COCAINE TRAFFIC AND LABORATORIES.

32. HE COMMENDS THE EFFORTS OF THE CUSTOMS AND THE POLICE AND SAID THAT TRAFFICKING SHOULD BE CONFRONTED NOT ONLY ON THE NORTH COAST BUT ALSO ON ALL BORDERING POINTS.

3. QTE MY EXPERIENCE INDICATES THAT THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM IS IN THE GUAJIRA AND THAT MILITARY PRESENCE THERE IS NECESSARY UNQTE.

34. QTE I CAN TAKE AGAIN THE EXAMPLE OF MEXICO, WHERE THE CAPITAL OF THE STATE OF SINALOA, CULIACAN, WHERE EXTENSIVE DRUG TRAFFICKING EXISTED IN 1974, 1975 AND 1976; TERRIBLE VIOLENCE, MASSACRES, THREE OR FOUR KILLINGS DAILY AND WHERE THE FARMERS DID NOT CULTIVATE THE OPIUM ON THEIR OWN LANDS, RATHER IN THE HILLS AND BACKLANDS, MILITARY PRESENCE TOOK PLACE IN THE CITY AND THE VIOLENCE AUTOMATICALLY DECLINED, AND THE CITY RETURNED TO ITS NATIVE POPULATION AND NO LONGER BELONGED TO THE TRAFFICKERS.

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 07244 03 OF 05 022019Z

ACTION SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 CTME-00 TRSE-00 ICA-20 NSC-05 OES-09

OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 L-03 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15

AGRE-00 AID-05 ARA-14 /113 W

-----058977 022041Z /45

P R 021646Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO DEA HQS WASHFC PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9295

UNCLAS SECTION 3 OF 5 BOGOTA 7244

DEA FOR ADMINISTRATOR BENSINGER; ENOA

STATE FOR N/M

35. AND IN SENALOA, THE PLANTATIONS WERE DESTROYED BY THE MILITARY IN COORDINATION WITH THE AUTHORITIES OF THE AREA, WHO RECOGNIZED THE ILLEGALITY OF OPIUM CULTIVATION IN THAT COUNTRY AND THE PLANTATIONS, IN FACT, WERE DESTROYED. THEREFORE, I AM IMPRESSED BY THE INTEREST SHOWN BY THE COLOMBIAN OFFICIALS WHO I MET AND I SINCERELY KNOW THAT THEY ARE CARRYING OUT THEIR WORK.

36. SUB-TITLE: THE NORTH AMERICANS. THE CHIEF OF THE DEA WAS QUESTIONED REGARDING THE NORTH AMERICAN TRAFFICKERS AND THE ACTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO CONTROL THE PROBLEM.

37. QTE A GREAT NUMBER OF INITIATIVES HAVE BEEN ADOPTED IN THE UNITED STATES TO CONTROL IT, AND I THINK THAT THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION, BECAUSE NO NATION IS GOING TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF DRUGS BY ITSELF. NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING IS AT AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL AND THE DEALERS UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 07244 03 OF 05 022019Z

RESPECT NEITHER BORDERS NOR LAWS. ON THE BORDERS OF THE UNITED STATES MANY THINGS HAVE BEEN DONE: IN FLORIDA THE DEA HAS OPENED OFFICES IN FORT MYERS; PANAMA CITY AND ALSO WE HAVE OPENED ANOTHER IN THE BAHAMAS. WE HAVE INCREASED OUR INVESTIGATIVE FORCE SOME 15PCT IN THE FLORIDA AREA WHERE WE HAVE INITIATED THE JOB OF COORDINATION WITH FBI TO FIND THE SOURCE OF THE FLOW OF MONEY AND TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS.

38. WE HAVE ESTABLISHED, LIKEWISE, A PROGRAM WITH THE

CUSTOMS AND PORT AUTHORITIES, TO INTERCEPT GIGANTIC CARGOS TRANSPORTED IN MODERN VESSELS WHICH TRAVEL FREELY OVER THE OCEAN. ALREADY IN 1978 40 OF THESE VESSELS WHICH HAVE ENTERED THE UNITED STATES HAVE BEEN SEIZED, THAT CARRIED 1,100,000 POUNDS OF MARIJUANA. WE HAVE REQUESTED AN INCREASE IN PENALTIES, WHEN IT CONCERNS PCP, WHICH IS A DRUG AS EQUALLY DANGEROUS AS LSG, AS WELL AS A LAW WHICH GRANTS US THE RESOURCES TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THE PROBLEM AND DISCOVER THE ORGANIZATIONAL NETWORK FOR THE ILLEGAL TRAFFICK OF DRUGS AND THE DEPOSITING OF THESE MONIES IN BANKS.

39. IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH SWITZERLAND AND NOW WITH THE BAHAMAS, WE HAVE AGREED TO INTERCHANGE INFORMATION OF CURRENCY INVESTIGATIONS AND WE HAVE ACHIEVED IN THIS MANNER THE FREEZING OF 22 MILLION DOLLARS IN BANK ACCOUNTS IN SWITZERLAND.

40. RECENTLY, WE HAD A MEETING BETWEEN OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WITH SPECIAL OFFICES IN COLOMBIA TO DISCUSS JUDICIAL PROSECUTION, AND RECENTLY IN NEW YORK MORE THAN 30 SUBJECTS WERE DISCOVERED INVOLVED IN ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR COCAINE TRANSACTIONS IN THE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 07244 03 OF 05 022019Z

UNITED STATES. THESE INDIVIDUALS BELONGED TO AN ORGANIZATION WHICH CONTROLLED THE TRAFFIC IN HOUSTON IN WHICH NORTH AMERICANS AND COLOMBIANS WERE INVOLVED.

41 I BELIEVE THAT THE ANSWER IS IN CONTROLLING THE HEADS OF THESE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

42. ALSO, THIS SIGNIFIES A STRENGTHENING OF THE PUNISHMENT, BUT FUNDAMENTALLY, CONTROLLING THE CULTIVATION OF NARCOTIC SUBSTANCES IN ALL NATIONS. IN THE CASE OF QTE FRENCH CONNECTION UNQTE, IN THE CASE OF TURKEY, WHICH WAS THE MAJOR PRODUCER OF OPIUM, AND RECENTLY IN MEXICO, WE HAVE SEEN RESULTS IN THE MEASURES TAKEN; A SIMILAR OPERATION WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN COLOMBIA AND I HOPE THAT THE EFFORT OF COORDINATION BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES WILL BE ACHIEVED IN ORDER TO ARRIVE AT A SATISFACTORY CONCLUSION. UNQTE.

43. SUB-TITLE: INVOLVED COLOMBIANS. TODELAR ASKED THE CHIEF OF THE DEA IF THERE WAS CONFIRMATION OF NAMES OF COLOMBIAN OFFICIALS OR CONGRESSMEN APPARENTLY INVOLVED IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS.

44. BENSINGER SAID: QTE PERSONALLY, I HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE WHICH ALLOWS ME TO CONFIRM TO YOU THE SPECIFIC INVOLVE-

MENT OF OFFICIALS IN THE TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS. BUT, I CAN TELL YOU THAT ONE OF THE PROBLEMS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS ON AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL, AND INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES, IS THAT THERE ARE TREMENDOUS PRESSURES AND POWERS THAT PROTECT THE ORGANIZATIONAL NETWORK AND THE QUESTION IS OF SUCH A NATURE THAT DEA HAS 50 INVESTIGATORS WORKING FULL TIME TO INVESTIGATE ANY ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ANY EMPLOYEE WHICH COULD INVOLVE HIM IN THE VIOLATION OF THE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OR THE PENAL LAWS IN THE UNITED STATES.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 07244 03 OF 05 022019Z

45. SUB-TITLE: VALUE OF THE TRAFFIC. THE CHIEF OF THE DEA (DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY) SPOKE REGARDING THE INCALCULABLE VALUE OF INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKING PRESENTLY.

46. QTE THE QUESTION IS IMPORTANT, PARTICULARLY, BECAUSE THE MONEY PROVIDES ENORMOUS BENEFITS TO A MINORITY THE TRAFFICKERS, WHO OPERATE OUTSIDE INTERNATIONAL LAWS AND WHO PRODUCE NO ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO THE NATIONS.

47. ALL ILLEGAL DRUG TRAFFICKING IN LATIN AMERICA ADDS UP TO AN ESTIMATED 5 BILLION DOLLARS. IN THE CASE OF MARIHUANA, COCA AND EVEN OPIUM CULTIVATORS, WHO ARE IN THE FIELDS IN SOME COUNTRIES, THEY EARN 5 TO 10 DOLLARS A DAY FOR THIS ACTIVITY.

48. THE INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKERS WHO PROCESS THESE SUBSTANCES AFTER THEY HAVE PASSED THROUGH THE LABORATORIES ARE EARNING BILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN THIS SAME PRODUCTION. I WOULD SAY THEN, THAT THE TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS IN ITS DIFFERENT CATEGORIES COULD BE ESTIMATED IN ASTRONOMICAL FIGURES, PRINCIPALLY IN RELATION TO THE DRUGS THAT ARRIVE IN THE U.S. FROM COLOMBIA.

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 07244 04 OF 05 021842Z
ACTION SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00
NSAE-00 CTME-00 TRSE-00 ICA-20 NSC-05 OES-09
OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 L-03 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
AGRE-00 AID-05 /113 W

-----055459 022042Z /45

P R 021646Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO :DEA HQS WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9296

UNCLAS SECTION 4 OF 5 BOGOTA 7244

DEA FOR ADMINISTRATOR BENSINGER; ENOA

STATE FOR N/M

49. SUB-TITLE: LEGALIZATION OF MARIHUANA. BENSINGER SAID THAT QTE THERE IS NOT ON E STATE OF THE UNITED STATES WHERE THE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTIONS OF MARIHUANA HAS BEEN LEGALIZED. THE CULTIVATION AND DISTRIBUTION IS ILLEGAL IN ALL OF THE TERRITORY OF THE UNITED STATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FEDERAL LAWS AND ALSO WITH THE INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS, AS IN THE CASE OF COLOMBIA ACCORDING TO THE 1961 AGREEMENT.

50. CERTAIN STATES HAVE DECIDED TO LESSEN THE PENALTY FOR THE USE OF MARIHUANA BY ADDICTS. ONE OF THOSE, THE STATE OF MAINE, HAD ONE OF THE MOST LIBERAL LEGISLATIONS REGARDING MARIHUANA, WHERE THE PENALTY FOR SELLERS OF LARGE AMOUNTS OF MARIHUANA WAS ONE YEAR OR LESS IMPRISONMENT. THIS LAW WAS RECENTLY MODIFIED AND A TERM OF FIVE TO TWELVE YEARS OF PRISON WAS ESTABLISHED FOR THE SALE OF MARIHUANA BECAUSE IT WAS FOUND THAT COASTAL ZONES, AS OCCURS IN THE GUAJIRA, WERE INVADED BY STRANGERS WITH BASES INSTALLED, AIR PLANES, WITH PEOPLE NOT FROM MAINE BUT RATHER FROM NEW YORK, FLORIDA, CALIFORNIA. THEREFORE, I ASSURE YOU THAT THE MOVEMENT FOR LEGISLATION TO LEGALIZE MARIHUANA DOES NOT EXIST
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 07244 04 OF 05 021842Z

IN THE UNITED STATES.

51. REGARDING THE INTRODUCTION OF PENAL SANCTIONS, THERE IS A MIXTURE, SOME OF THE STATES THAT HAD MORE LIBERAL MEASURES HAVE NOW INCREASED THE PENALTIES.

52. WITH REGARD TO COLOMBIA, I SEE NO REASONS WHY THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD WANT TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE STANDARDS OF INTERNATIONAL OBLGIATIONS STATED IN THE AGREEMENTS OF 1961 AND I DON'T BELIEVE IT TO BE A LOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN ANY COUNTRY OF THE WORLD UNQTE.

53. SUB-TITLE: THE METHOD FOR FIGHTING. THE DIRECTOR-ADMINISTRATOR

OF THE DEA ALSO COMMENTED ABOUT THE METHOD OF ANTI-NARCOTICS BATTLE, IN ORDER TO DECREASE THE DEMAND AND CONSUMPTION, AND PROVIDE EFFECTIVE TOOLS TO THE AUTHORITIES.

54. QTE I BELIEVE THAT, IN FACT, BOTH EFFORTS ARE TAKING PLACE AND ARE NECESSARY. I ASSURE YOU THAT IN THE UNITED STATES, WHILE A YEAR AND A HALF AGO THE DEMAND FOR HEROIN WAS RELATIVELY HIGH AND THE DRUG THAT WAS SOLD ON THE STREETS WAS OF 6.6 PERCENT PURITY, THE GREAT EFFORTS TO ERRADICATE THE OPIUM CULTIVATIONS WHICH PRODUCE THE HEROIN MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE DRUG TO BECOME SCARCE, LESS AVAILABLE AND LESS PURE, AND ITS TRAFFICKING MADE RISKIER; AND THE NUMBER OF TRAFFICKERS DIMINISHED AS A RESULT OF THE OPERATION.

55. IN SHORT, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES CAN ALSO INCREASE ITS SANCTIONS, AS THE SENATE IS DIRECTING ITSELF TOWARDS THE CONTROL OF THE FLOW OF MONIES THAT FINANCE IN MANY WAYS THE ILLEGAL PRODUCTION IN OTHER NATIONS. I BELIEVE AND FIND IT FAVORABLE A FINANCING FOR COUNTRIES SUCH AS COLOMBIA TO DEVELOP AND MAKE STRONGER THE OPERATIONS. BUT, IN SOME CASES, MONETARY UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 07244 04 OF 05 021842Z

ASSISTANCE ALONE IS NOT THE SOLUTION. IN THE CASE OF COLOMBIA, AND IN SPECIFIC THE GUAJIRA, IT IS NECESSARY TO UTILIZE NATIONAL RESOURCES ASSIGNED TO THE MILITARY IN ORDER TO STOP PRODUCTION AND ILLEGAL TRAFFIC OF NARCOTICS, IMMEDIATELY UNQTE.

56. SUB-TITLE: NEW COOPERATION. BENSINGER SPOKE OF THE PROGRAMS OF COOPERATION OF THE UNITED STATES TOWARDS COLOMBIA TO LIMIT THE TRAFFIC OF DRUGS. QTE OF ONE THING I AM SURE, AND THAT IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND OFFICIALS OF COLOMBIA, AS WELL AS THE METHODS UTILIZED, CONSTITUTE A GREAT COMMITMENT TO STOP THE PROBLEM. PRINCIPALLY, THE AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED STATES IN COLOMBIA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE AND PROGRAMS OF COOPERATION. LET ME ADD THAT I BELIEVE THAT AMBASSADOR DIEGO ASENSIO IS NOT ONLY FAMILIAR WITH THIS PROBLEM BUT PLEDGED TO WORK WITH COLOMBIAN OFFICIALS. I MET WITH HIM IN WASHINGTON THE DAY BEFORE MY TRIP TO LATIN AMERICAN AND WE DISCUSSED A SERIES OF DECISIONS. HE WILL RETURN NEXT WEEK AND I HOPE THAT HE REVIEWS WITH COLOMBIAN OFFICIALS EXISTING POLICIES IN ORDER TO OBTAIN REAL BENEFITS FOR ALL INTERESTED COUNTRIES. UNQTE

57. SUB-TITLE: DEFINITION OF RESPONSIBILITIES. FINALLY. MR. BENSINGER WAS ASKED TO DEFINE UP TO WHAT POINT THE UNITED STATES RECOGNIZES ITS GUILT OR ITS RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS.

58. QTE I DON'T BELIEVE THAT SUCH A POSITION IS VALID. NOR, DO I BELIEVE THAT ANY COUNTRY CAN MAKE ITSELF OR ITS NEIGHBORS RESPONSIBLE BY THE FACT THAT THE DEMAND IS CREATED OUTSIDE THE

COUNTRY. THIS WOULD PRODUCE THE RUPTURE OF SIGNED AGREEMENTS BY THE DIFFERENT NATIONS. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES IS GUILTY BECAUSE THERE IS A DEMAND FOR DRUGS AND THUS THE EFFORTS OF SOLUTION CANNOT BE UNILATERAL. THE RESPONSIBILITY IS THE OAS' AND IT IS A VERY SERIOUS RESPONSIBILITY. WE HAVE SET DOWN THE BASIS TO NORMALIZE AND REGULATE THE PRODUCTION AND COMMERCIAL USE OF DRUGS WHICH ARE DERIVED FROM NARCOTICS. WITH THAT, WE HAVE ACHIEVED THAT THE USE OF AMPHETAMINES, UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 07244 04 OF 05 021842Z

FOR EXAMPLE, HAS BEEN REDUCTED IN THE LAST SEVEN YEARS, FROM 66,000 POUNDS ANNUALLY TO ONLY 7,700 POUNDS AND THE NUMBER OF DEATHS CAUSED BY BARBITUATES AND AMPHETAMINES HAVE DECREASED CONSIDERABLY.

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 07244 05 OF 05 021931Z
ACTION SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00
NSAE-00 CTME-00 TRSE-00 ICA-20 NSC-05 OES-09
OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 L-03 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
AGRE-00 AID-05 /113 W
-----056837 022042Z /45

P R 021646Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO DEA HQS WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9297

UNCLAS SECTION 5 OF 5 BOGOTA 7244

DEA FOR ADMINISTRATOR BENSINGER; ENOA

STATE FOR SNM

59. WE ARE TACKLING, EXPRESSED BENSINGER, THE PROBLEM OF NEW CHEMICAL DRUGS SUCH AS PCP, OF THE SAME NATURE AS LSD, INCREASING PENALTIES AGAINST PRODUCERS AND TRAFFICKERS, AND WE ARE INTENSIFYING A SERIOUS EFFORT TO CONTROL THE USE OF DANGEROUS DRUGS PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES. I BELIEVE THAT THE DEMAND OF DRUGS BY PEOPLE HAS EXISTED FOR THE LAST TWO THOUSAND YEARS, BUT I BELIEVE THAT EACH COUNTRY HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO

ASSURE THAT THE USE OF THESE DRUGS, WHEN THE CASE MAY BE, IS DONE LEGALLY AND UNDER MEDICAL CONTROL. IN THIS SENSE, EDUCATION AND PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS ARE VERY IMPORTANT AND ALSO SUITABLE LEGISLATION REGARDING DISTRIBUTION AND SALES.

60. THE PROBLEM IS NOT UNILATERAL, IT IS HEALTH, WELL-BEING, AND NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STABILITY. IT IS A PROBLEM DIRECTLY RELATED WITH THE FUTURE OF THE YOUTH OF THE WORLD AND FOR THAT REASON I BELIEVE IN THE SUCCESS OF THE RECENT CONFERENCE IN LIMA BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO INTEGRATE OURSELVES TO COMBAT, CONFRONT AND RESOLVE IT UNQTE. FROM SAIC BURNETT.

BRIGGS

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 07244 05 OF 05 021931Z

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, PRESS COMMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BOGOTA07244
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780316-0833
Format: TEL
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197808104/aaaadjje.tel
Line Count: 674
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ad240358-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SNM
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 13
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1553011
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BENSINGER RADIO INTERVIEW
TAGS: SNAR, SOPN, CO, (BENSINGER, PETER)
To: DEA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ad240358-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014